

Book Reviews

Auriculotherapy

Raphael Nogier (Translated by Peter Beauclerk)
Thieme, 2009
ISBN 9783131480019

Auriculotherapy is the English translation of Raphael Nogier's 2006 French language book of the same name. Raphael Nogier is the son of the late Paul Nogier, the originator of auriculotherapy. Since Paul Nogier's death in 1996, Raphael has further developed his father's work and continues to teach auriculotherapy and practise medicine in Lyon, France. Auriculotherapy is a clinical handbook aimed at clinicians who have previously been exposed to the principles and practice of auriculotherapy. This is not a TCM book. Indeed the usual audience for this work in France are western medical doctors, and this is evident throughout the book in the way various conditions are categorised and discussed.

The first half of the book is a basic introduction to auriculotherapy. The different types of auricular points (pressure sensitive points and neurovascular points) are discussed, followed by the anatomy and innervation of the auricle. The spine and nervous system is located on the auricle followed by the mapping of tissues by their embryonic mesodermal, endodermal and ectodermal origins. Master points are identified and the methods of point detection and then treatment are outlined. Absent is any discussion of the function or indications for individual points. The first half of the book concludes with a repertoire of 25 common conditions, including tobacco addiction treatment, common musculoskeletal complaints, infertility,

anxiety and asthma. Raphael Nogier has a particular interest in food allergies and runs seminars on identifying allergens using the VAS pulse and substance test rings (not discussed in this volume). It is no surprise then that the need to identify food allergies and remove the offending foods from the diet is a frequent commentary in many of these conditions.

The second half of the book delves superficially into the intricacies of auricular medicine, which will be unfamiliar to many TCM practitioners. In 1968 Paul Nogier discovered the Vascular Auricular Sign, or VAS pulse as it is usually called. The VAS pulse led to a deeper exploration of the auricle and new diagnostic and therapeutic techniques. The use of these methods is usually referred to as auricular medicine rather than auriculotherapy.

Also in the second half of the book the three phase relationships are discussed, along with point locations on the posterior surface of the ear. Geometric point relationships, alignment of points and the prioritisation of points for treatment are explained, along with the VAS pulse. It is noteworthy that Nogier states that this is a very difficult pulse quality to master. The principles of cutaneous photoperception and their relationship to auricular diagnosis is covered next. The seven Nogier frequencies along with their roles in diagnosis and treatment are outlined.

The treatment of three conditions which draw on the intricacies of part two are then briefly considered, namely peripheral neuropathies, fibromyalgia and depressive disorders. The ability to reliably identify the VAS pulse is essential to the utilisation of the material presented in part two. Appendices include a glossary, recommendations for special equipment and supplies and recommendations for further reading.

This work's greatest strength is also its greatest weakness. The book is presented in an easy-to-follow outline style with illustrations. Indeed the first half of the book is reminiscent of lecture notes I made when attending Raphael Nogier's introductory lectures in Lyon in 2000. This outline style allows a lot of territory to be covered in a small volume and facilitates finding key information. This makes the book an ideal companion for a course on auriculotherapy. This outline style also means the work is short on detail and explanation. This lack of depth would soon frustrate a keen student who would seek further information from one of the volumes discussed later. Similarly, a novice without some hands-on instruction would find insufficient detail to make much use of the concepts of the second half.

Nogier's Auriculotherapy should be compared to Brian Frank's Auricular Medicine and Auricular Therapy: A Practical Approach (Author house, 2007), and Terry Oleson's Auriculotherapy

Manual: Chinese and Western Systems of Ear Acupuncture (3rd edition, Churchill Livingstone, 2002). Each of these books contains a preface by Raphael Nogier and both authors studied under the late Paul Nogier. Brian Frank is a Texan anaesthetist, pain management specialist and medical acupuncturist, and Terry Oleson is a Los Angeles psychologist and auriculotherapist.

Frank's text is written in a narrative style and would appeal to those seeking a more detailed explanation of the Nogier work, especially the concepts presented in the second half regarding auricular medicine. Frank gives a more thorough description of locations of points in all three phases and notes on clinical considerations for each point. A useful chapter on blockages to healing is provided and the important concept of cerebral laterality is discussed more thoroughly than Nogier. The second half of Frank's

book introduces auricular medicine, and protocols for both basic and advanced auricular medicine treatment are given. The ability to reliably identify the VAS pulse is essential to utilising the advanced ideas presented in Frank's work as well; while it fleshes out the detail, the second part of this work is also more suited to clinicians with some previous training in the European style of auriculotherapy.

Oleson's book is a compendium of western (Nogier style) auriculotherapy and Chinese style ear acupuncture. A comprehensive overview of the development of each system along with their similarities and differences are presented. The principles of auricular medicine are comprehensively addressed, offering further explanation than in Nogier's volume. The tone of Frank's and Nogier's books is very much of clinicians explaining their work.

Oleson's in contrast is more academic, ensuring that all of the territory is well documented. Arguably the most valuable feature of this book is the comprehensive repertoire which offers a good starting point for the treatment of over 250 conditions using both Chinese and European point selections.

Each of these books has a place on the shelf of the enthusiast of auriculotherapy. Nogier's is a quick reference and course companion; Frank's offers a deeper understanding of the intricacies of point indications and auricular medicine; Oleson's allows the user to dip into sections of interest, whether Chinese or European style, and find inspiration for point selection.

Reviewed by Stephen Janz

Acupuncture for Musculoskeletal Injury

Shao-jie Lu

People's Medical Publishing House, 2008 (2nd edition)

ISBN 9787117102025

Acupuncture for Musculoskeletal Injury is an interesting and very practical book that is suitable for both the student and the practitioner. Printed on quality paper with a hard cover, it is a beautiful book to handle. The text describes the diagnosis and treatment of many common and not so common musculoskeletal complaints and covers all regional body areas where acupuncture can be used. It is the result of a life time of clinical experience from Dr Shao-jie Lu from the Hubei Province in China, who reports having treated over 10 000 patients since 1971. Published by the People's Medical Publishing House in Beijing, this is now the second edition.

The book itself is easy to use and offers interesting clinical information to a depth not seen in other similar books. For each musculoskeletal complaint, there is a clear explanation of the condition using biomedical terms as well as the condition's causative factors. In addition, the author identifies what population the condition commonly affects, its clinical manifestations, the

positive signs associated with a physical examination, as well as the results from other tests where appropriate (e.g. x-ray).

Following this introductory section is the Chinese medicine syndrome differentiation and an explanation of the treatment, including treatment principle, acupuncture point selection, needle technique and expected course of treatment. The reporting of details for the acupuncture treatment is very clear and the book has ample diagrams, illustrations and pictures, which are very helpful for the reader.

Perhaps the most interesting part for me personally was the 'experience and understanding' section reviewed at the end of each condition. Here Lu offers his own thoughts and reflections, which is a refreshing approach not often seen in other texts. As happens so often with books on 'how to treat a condition', the reader frequently fails to grasp the author's reasoning and perspective on the prognosis of the condition and what to do if the treatment is ineffective. This

insightful section starts off with a brief overview of the condition from the Chinese medicine perspective, followed by alternative treatment strategies that can be applied if the suggested treatment approach has failed. It also outlines how a practitioner might modify the point selection when, after a certain amount of time has elapsed, the more orthodox acupuncture treatment approach has failed. Finally, the author concludes by identifying what other options the patient can pursue if they desire.

Overall, this book is an informative addition to current texts on the treatment of musculoskeletal conditions with acupuncture. For most clinicians the 'experience' section will prove to be most useful, especially for those most difficult to treat and non-responsive patients.

Reviewed by John Deare

Essentials of Electroacupuncture: Theories and Treatments of Stroke Paresis, Review of Five Element Theory

Jeung Ho Choi
BookSurge, 2009
ISBN 1439219273

The acceptance of electroacupuncture (EA) by acupuncturists varies greatly, with some practitioners using EA on almost every patient and others never applying it. I suspect one of the reasons for this difference is because the clinical application of EA is not well researched and hence not taught in depth during undergraduate training. Most acupuncture books have a couple of pages designated to EA, but there are very few books devoted entirely to EA when compared with the number of books published on acupuncture.

So any book about EA should be welcomed with some enthusiasm. The title of this book, *Essentials of Electroacupuncture*, was rather promising and I was keen to see how it would differ or surpass another recent book, *Electroacupuncture: A Practical Manual and Resource*, edited by David Mayor (Elsevier, 2007; reviewed by Christopher Zaslowski *Aust J Acupunct Chin Med* 2007; 2(2):38).

Dr Choi, the author of this 245-page paperback, is a medical doctor in California who specialises in pain management and has practised acupuncture alongside his medical practice for more than twenty years. To better understand acupuncture, the author also studied the I Ching, Confucianism and Taoism. He is an accomplished calligrapher of Chinese and Korean writing.

Only after I had read the book did I notice its two subtitles in smaller font: *Theories and Treatment of Stroke Paresis* and *Review of Five Element Theory*. The three titles say it all about this book: a one-stop shop for electroacupuncture.

It starts with sections on the history of acupuncture, its use in western countries, education, and modern research. The next sections explain how to prepare patients, some principles of selecting acupoints for reinforcing or reducing, moxibustion techniques and when and how to use them, as well as contraindications for acupuncture. These are then followed by acupuncture point formulae for various conditions, including head and face pain, disorders of the musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal, urological, gynaecological, and neurological systems, disorders of eye, ear and nose, stroke rehabilitation and strategies for pain management. Limited explanation is offered for the formulae. As in many other introductory acupuncture books, it provides a list of acupuncture points on the twelve regular and eight extra meridians, including their location, needling and indications. It finishes with five elements theory, its philosophy, meditation and attainment. Unfortunately, there is no index.

The book is written in simple language, like transcriptions of lectures, intelligent conversations with students, or records of Choi's thoughts without much editing.

I feel this book is for those who have limited understanding of acupuncture, but need practical advice on how to use it in the clinic without being burdened with too many theories.

So how much is about EA? Actually, the use of EA and the theory of five elements are threaded throughout the book. Choi tells us to apply EA onto bilateral points, with the negative pole on the affected side and the positive pole on the healthy side, and that low frequency is preferred. This differs from several other textbooks, which specifically state that a pair of EA electrodes should be placed on the same side of the body and should not cross the midline. This discrepancy reflects the insufficient research we have about EA. Overall, the author spent more time explaining five-element acupuncture than EA.

If you want to learn the wisdom of an experienced acupuncturist who specialises in five-element acupuncture, then this book is for you. For me, I particularly enjoyed reading the four-page section about Pain Management Strategy. However, if you want to have a comprehensive understanding about EA and a book that you can refer to now and then, then you must have the book by David Mayor.

Reviewed by Zhen Zheng

Chinese Medicine in Fertility Disorders

Andreas Noll and Sabine Wilms
Thieme, 2010
ISBN 9783131489913

The number of fertility-related acupuncture consultations has grown significantly over the last ten years. Over a similar period of time, acupuncture as an adjunct to assisted fertility treatment has been a productive area of research and, although narrow in its focus, this has stimulated consumer interest in using acupuncture. The translation and relevance of research findings into clinical practice has been hotly debated. Text books to guide practitioners in this emerging area have overall been sparse, and this book contributes to the limited resources available within this specialty. Noll and Wilms have compiled a text that aims to address both the integration of Chinese medicine within biomedicine while also promoting its application within a broader TCM framework.

Practitioners will engage with this book, which acknowledges a holistic

model of care in working with couples experiencing infertility. The breadth of the book is reflected by content, including a historical and cultural context, TCM treatment of fertility and pregnancy, the use of other TCM modalities such as qigong, tuina, moxibustion, Chinese dietetics and the area of patient support.

As many practitioners find themselves specialising in a particular area, this book will be especially useful to those building their expertise in this field. Many chapters are authored by practitioners and provide useful case studies to guide practice. Biomedicine in the fertility field is covered to a level that enables the acupuncture practitioner to feel confident with engaging and integrating their treatment within assisted fertility treatment. The content of the book also covers the causes of infertility, with

fertility disorders covered from both a biomedical and TCM perspective. The book proceeds to guide supportive treatment during pregnancy and miscarriage, and finishes with supportive care for those successful and unsuccessful with their fertility journey.

For the more experienced practitioner, the book may offer more with respect to breadth of knowledge rather than depth. I particularly enjoyed the chapters on the historical and cultural context of fertility. This is a book for the clinician: it is easy to read, informative, and I would recommend it to practitioners working in this area.

Reviewed by Caroline Smith